Oswald's Widow Not Certain He's In Texas Grave

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FORT WORTH, Tex., Sept. 5 —The widow of accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald pleaded with a judge today to allow exhumation of Oswald's grave because she no longer is sure he is buried there.

Reading a prepared statement to the hushed courtroom, Marina Oswald Porter urged the court to allow the exhumation requested by British author-attorney Michael Eddowes.

"I strongly believe in the possibility of the body not being there," she said, and asked that the court give permission to dig up Oswald's grave at Rose Hill Burial Park "as soon as possible."

"We will have very simple proof—when the casket is opened," she said.

After 20 minutes of testimony from Porter, the hearing was recessed until 9 a.m. Monday. She immediately was whisked away through a back exit and did not talk with reporters.

Porter, who came to the United States from Minsk, U.S.S.R., tried to read her statement upon taking the stand, but Judge James Wright would not allow it until an attorney explained she preferred to read because of her halting English.

She earlier had said she had no doubt her husband was buried Nov. 25, 1963, but she said she wanted to end the mystery of who—if anyone—was buried in the grave. Some theories contend it was not Oswald, but a look-alike Soviet agent who killed President John F. Kennedy and was interred.

Porter testified that "to give my consent was a very hard decision and

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was not done for purposes of publicity or any financial gain. I carefully weighed all the factors."

The legal battle over exhumation, heightened when Oswald's brother, Robert, filed suit to stop it, has been "a hardship—like you're hanging on a limb," she said.

During her testimony, Porter carefully discussed the possibility, raised by Eddowes, that a Soviet agent had assumed Oswald's identity before their meeting in 1959 in Minsk.

"I met Lee Harvey Oswald, I married him and that was the same man buried there," she said. 'I believe the person buried there [in Rose Hill] was the same person I married."

Robert Oswald, general manager of a Wichita Falls, Tex., lumber company, earlier testified he picked up Lee Harvey Oswald at Dallas' Love Field on June 14, 1962, and "I took note of some changes in his hair and complexion.

"His hair texture was thinner and the texture seemed to be a little different than it had been."

Robert Oswald said the man had a different complexion and confirmed previous testimony, given before the Warren Commission, that Lee Harvey Oswald appeared to have an artificial tan and a changed accent when speaking to his wife.

He said there were no balding tendencies in their family, but confirmed that Lee Harvey Oswald, then 22, was beginning to get a bald spot.

He also repeated Warren Commission testimony in which he said he could not exclude the possibility of his brother undergoing shock treatment in the Soviet Union.

"I believe I used the terminology in pure speculation," he said.

But Oswald testified he was positive it was his younger brother who was buried in Rose Hil, and there was no need to dig up the body.

Oswald said publicity about the case had caused him extreme mental anguish and distress and "has prevented me fom conducting a normal life." He said he was "very strongly opposed" to any exhumation.

Robert Oswald contends Porter does not have the power to approve the exhumation, because he paid for the cemetery plot.